

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Jesse Mateo Rodrigues, DOB: 3/26/80, St. Paul, Minnesota, pleaded guilty today in U.S. District Court in Madison to conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute at least 500 grams of methamphetamine.

Between 2002 and 2005, Rodrigues and three co-defendants, Paul Horvatich, Paul Letsos, and Isreal Flores, distributed multiple kilograms of methamphetamine in Superior, Wisconsin and Duluth, Minnesota, where they also utilized several residences to store the methamphetamine. At the plea hearing, Rodrigues admitted to distributing methamphetamine and to traveling to the Western District of Wisconsin to collect payment for methamphetamine.

On June 1, 2006, Horvatich was sentenced by Chief U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb to 25 years in prison. On May 18, 2006, Letsos was sentenced to 46 months for his role as a courier in the conspiracy. Flores' sentencing is scheduled for July 21, 2006.

Judge Crabb scheduled Rodrigues's sentencing for August 8, 2006. Rodrigues faces at least 10 years in prison without the possibility of parole, in addition to maximum penalties of life in prison, a \$4,000,000 fine, and at least five years of supervised release. In addition to this case, Rodrigues has been indicted in federal

court in the District of Minnesota for distributing methamphetamine and if convicted, faces a mandatory minimum additional five years in prison along with a \$2,000,00 fine.

The charges against Rodrigues were the result of an investigation conducted by the Douglas County Sheriff's Department and the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Division of Criminal Investigations - Narcotics Bureau. Prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul W. Connell.

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